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 FM SECSTATE WASHDC
 TO RUEFERS/AMEMBASSY ALGIERS PRIORITY 1227
 RUEMCH/AMEMBASSY ANKARA PRIORITY 1211
 RUEBPE/AMEMBASSY BELGRADE PRIORITY 4027
 RUEBAP/AMEMBASSY BUEENAREST PRIORITY 4231
 RUEBAC/AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY 3719
 RUEBOM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO PRIORITY 1172
 RUEBOM/AMEMBASSY LACCA PRIORITY 2492
 RUEBOM/AMEMBASSY JAKARTTA PRIORITY 5925
 RUEBOM/AMEMBASSY JEDDA PRIORITY 1738
 RUEBOM/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 1645
 RUEBOM/AMEMBASSY TEHRAN PRIORITY 5857
 RUEBOM/AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY 9054
 RUEBOM/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON PRIORITY 1332
 RUEBOM/USINT BAGHDAD PRIORITY 2336
 RUEBOM/AMEMBASSY BEIJING PRIORITY 3265
 RUEBOM/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD PRIORITY 2571
 RUEBOM/AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU PRIORITY 2772
 RUEBOM/USMISSION USNATO PRIORITY 3259
 INFO RUEBOM/AMEMBASSY KABUL PRIORITY 2223
 RUEBOM/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY 7954
 RUEBOM/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 6140
 RUEBOM/ CINCPAC HONOLULU HAWAII 4322
 BT
 S E C R E T SECTION 21 OF 22 STATE 273949/21

LIMDIS

P.O. 12755: CDS, 13/17/85 (COOM, JANE A.), HBA

TAGS: PPR, MILI, AF, TP

SUBJECT: DIALOGUE ON AFGHANISTAN

1. (S - ENTIRE TEXT)

2. INP HAS PREPARED FOLLOWING TALKING POINTS ON SOVIET-
 AFGHAN RELATIONS AND SOVIET INVOLVEMENT IN AFGHANISTAN
 FROM WHICH ACTION ADDRESSEES MAY AT THEIR DISCRETION DRAW
 IN CONTINUING DISCUSSIONS WITH HOST GOVERNMENTS ON
 SOVIET INTENTIONS IN AFGHANISTAN. THESE POINTS SUPPLEMENT
 INFORMATION PROVIDED PREVIOUSLY IN STATE 23742, DATED
 APRIL 19, 1979.

3. DURING THE SIX MONTHS PRECEDING THE SEPTEMBER 14-16 AMIN TAKEOVER, MOSCOW EMPLOYED A SERIES OF POLITICAL TACTICS TO DEAL WITH A DETERIORATING SITUATION IN AFGHANISTAN:

(A) IT FIRST TRIED TO PERSUADE THE TARAKI-AMIN REGIME TO BROADEN ITS BASE OF SUPPORT AND TO MODERATE ITS POLICIES. THIS ADVICE WENT LARGELY UNHEEDED.

(B) FOR A WHILE THEREAFTER, MOSCOW DISTANCED ITSELF SOMEWHAT FROM AMIN AND TARAKI AS INDIVIDUALS, WHILE CONTINUING PUBLICLY TO SUPPORT THE AFGHAN "REVOLUTION."

(C) HOWEVER, MOSCOW EVENTUALLY SEEMS TO HAVE CONCLUDED (ABOUT AUGUST) THAT THERE WAS NO VIABLE ALTERNATIVE TO THE TARAKI/AMIN REGIME (ALTHOUGH THERE HAS BEEN SPECULATION THAT MOSCOW INTENDED TO BACK THE MORE MODERATE TARAKI AGAINST AMIN).

AT ANY RATE, WHEN TARAKI PASSED THROUGH MOSCOW ON ROUTE HOME FROM THE HAVANA NAM SUMMIT IN EARLY SEPTEMBER, HIS MEETING WITH SPOZHNKY WAS GIVEN EXTENSIVE PUBLICITY IN A PARTY-TO-PARTY CONTEXT THAT CAME CLOSER THAN EVER BEFORE TO RECOGNIZING THE PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF AFGHANISTAN (PDPA) AS A COMMUNIST PARTY.

4. DURING THE SAME SIX-MONTH PERIOD, SOVIET POLITICAL EFFORTS WERE SUPPLEMENTED BY MILITARY MOVES:

-- THE NUMBER OF SOVIET MILITARY PERSONNEL INCREASED TO ABOUT 1,500 BY 4. 70, INCLUDING ADVISERS AND MILITARY SUPPORT PERSONNEL, SOME OF WHOM ARE ATTACHED DOWN TO THE BATTALION LEVEL IN THE AFGHAN MILITARY.

-- INCREASINGLY, SOVIET ADVISERS HAVE TAKEN OVER ROLES THAT PROVED STRICTLY ADVISORY NATURE, E.G., IN COMMAND FUNCTIONS AND ESPECIALLY IN SOME COMBAT FUNCTIONS AS WELL. WE HAVE, HOWEVER, NO RELIABLE INDICATION THAT SOVIET FORCES HAVE PARTICIPATED IN COMBAT AGAINST INSURGENTS AS UNITS.

-- SOVIET UNCOMFORT ABOUT THE AFGHAN SECURITY SITUATION IN THE FACE OF THE INSURGENCY AND ARMY MUTINIES LED THE SOVIETS TO TAKE ON SOME DIRECT SECURITY RESPONSIBILITIES, E.G., AT Bagram AIR BASE WHERE THERE IS A FORCE OF 423 SOVIETS.

5. AMIN'S SEPTEMBER 14-16 SEIZURE OF POWER BY ALL INDICATIONS OCCURRED WITHOUT ADVANCE WARNING TO MOSCOW.

BUT DETAILS OF WHAT HAPPENED REMAIN UNCLEAR. SOVIET AMBASSADOR PUZANOV APPARENTLY KEPT IN TOUCH WITH EVENTS AS THEY UNFOLDED.

-- THERE WAS A BRIEF PERIOD OF UNCERTAINTY IN MOSCOW, E.G., WHEN SOVIET MEDIA CONTINUED TO PUBLICIZE TARAKI'S LEADERSHIP AFTER HE HAD ALREADY BEEN OVERTHROWN. MOSCOW'S INITIAL MESSAGE OF CONGRATULATIONS TO AMIN ON HIS "ELECTION" TO TARAKI'S POSTS WAS NON-COMMITTAL, BUT SINCE THEN SOVIET MEDIA HAS IMPLICATED SUPPORT FOR THE NEW REGIME.

-- IT IS LIKELY THAT SOVIET ADVICE WAS REFLECTED IN AMIN'S INITIAL SEPTEMBER 17 SPEECH AND IN SOME OF HIS